

Article Alert

No. 10, October 2008

Published by the Information Resource Center, U.S. Embassy Jakarta

About the IRC

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center (IRC) in Jakarta is a specialized Reference and Research Library. Its goal is to provide accurate, up-to-date information to the public about topics such as US. foreign policy, legislation, social issues, economics and trade. High speed Internet computers, printer and photo copier are provided at the IRC for library users.

Books, articles, and websites described in the Article Alert present a diversity of views in order to keep our IRC users abreast of current issues in the United States. These items represent the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessary reflect official U.S. Government policy.

Copies of the articles listed in IRC's Article Alert are available from the Information Resource Center, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy Jakarta. Should you wish to receive a photocopy of an article, please complete the ARTICLE ALERT REQUEST FORM (page 4) and return it to us. We will mail or fax the requested articles directly to you at no cost.

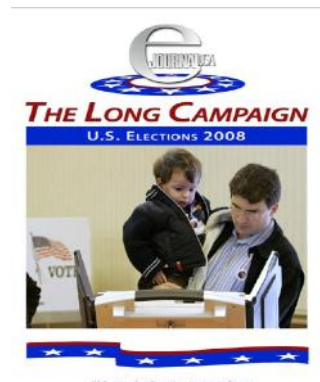
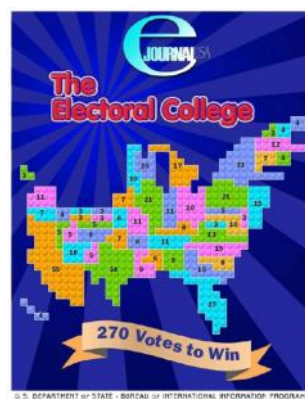
U.S. Elections 2008



Elections for President and Vice President of the United States are indirect elections that occur quadrennially (the count beginning with the year 1792) on Election Day, the Tuesday after the first Monday of November. Voters cast ballots for a slate of electors of the U.S. Electoral College, who in turn directly elect the President and Vice President. The most recent election occurred on November 2, 2004. The next election is scheduled for November 4, 2008.

Guide to the 2008 Election is available at:
<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/index.html>

E-Publications on Elections



Inside this issue:

Elections 2008	1
E-Publications on Elections	1
U.S. Elections	2
Economic Security	2
International Security	2
U.S. Society and Values	3

Every presidential campaign is dramatic and historic, but as the fervor surrounding the 2008 election continues to build, U.S. voters and the rest of the world will want to consider the candidates' personal histories more closely. What sort of people rise to the top in the U.S. political system, what are their attributes, their sensibilities, and their strengths?

More than 100 million voters are likely to cast ballots in nationwide U.S. elections November 4. But only 538 men and women will elect the next president of the United States, and those elections will take place in 50 state capitals and in Washington, D.C., December 15. This indirect election system, called the Electoral College and devised in 1787 by the framers of the Constitution, puzzles Americans and non-Americans alike

This edition of eJournal USA presents an introduction to the upcoming 2008 U.S. elections. In these elections, U.S. voters will have the opportunity to vote for president and vice president, congressional representatives, state and local officials, and ballot initiatives. The journal describes aspects of this election which make it different from most recent elections and includes a pro-con debate of the Electoral College.

U.S. ELECTIONS 2008

1. Ealy, Steven D. THE 2008 ELECTION (Society, August 2008)

The 2008 presidential election will be significant both for domestic and for foreign policy. Issues of security in domestic policy will continue to trump issues of freedom. The difficulties of resolving our military presence in Iraq will be the first among many important issues the new administration must confront. In both domestic and foreign affairs the new administration will have to deal with the unanticipated consequences of inherited policies even as it creates its own agenda and its own set of unintended consequences

2. Ambinder, Marc and Gree, Joshua RETHINKING 2008 (Atlantic Monthly Online edition, The Atlantic's 2008 Presidential Election Campaign Supplement)

This year, the youth vote will finally make a difference. Every four years, it seems, especially among Democrats, the idea that the youth vote will rise up and make a difference gets bandied about excitedly and then ... well, not much happens. Young people were supposed to put Al Gore over the top in 2000; four years later, they were supposed to deliver the Democratic nomination to Howard Dean. This year, the youth excitement has attached itself to Barack Obama. But unlike in the past, there's reason to expect that this enthusiasm might produce real results.

3. Cost, Jay HOW OBAMA WON THE NOMINATION (Policy Review, August & September 2008, No.150)

The votes are counted per state, with every state being issued a certain number of electors who



U.S. ELECTIONS 2008

Keep your eye on America.gov for full Election Day coverage November 4

then cast a second vote at the Electoral College. The resulting turmoil ultimately induced the party to adopt a series of reforms requiring that state parties open their delegate selection processes to the party electorate at large. The implication of this argument is not that Hillary Clinton somehow should have been the Democratic Party's nominee for president, that faulty rules denied her a title to which she had a superior moral claim.

4. Holbrooke, Richard THE NEXT PRESIDENT (Foreign Affairs, September/October 2008)

The next president will inherit

leadership of a nation that is still the most powerful in the world -- a nation rich with the continued promise of its dynamic and increasingly diverse population, a nation that could, and must, again inspire, mobilize, and lead the world. At the same time, the next president will inherit a more difficult opening-day set of international problems than any of his predecessors have since at least the end of World War II. In such circumstances, his core challenge will be nothing less than to re-create a sense of national purpose and strength, after a period of drift, decline, and disastrous mistakes.

ECONOMIC SECURITY

5. Bate, Roger; Nugent, Rachel THE DEADLY WORLD OF FAKE DRUGS (Foreign Policy, no. 168, September/October 2008, pp. 57-65)

The fake-drug sector has continued to grow in speed and sophistication and, in the past decade, become one of the world's fastest-growing criminal enterprises, says the author, a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. Knock-offs have expanded, with often fatal consequences for unaware patients, from mostly lifestyle drugs to pharmaceuticals used in treating major diseases. A lack of quality oversight and enforcement makes poorer countries the most lucrative

potential markets for counterfeiters.

6. Rickards A., James A MOUNTAIN, OVERLOOKED (Washington Post, October 2, 2008, p. A23)

Fraser, author of WALL STREET: AMERICA'S DREAM PALACE and a student of the history of relations between Washington and Wall Street, writes that the undoing of Pres. Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal program and its regulatory regime, with the "socialization of risk", beginning with the massive bailout of the savings and loan associations in the 1980s, is what has resulted in the present-day collapse of the U.S. financial system.

7. Starkman, Dean BOILER ROOM: THE BUSINESS PRESS IS MISSING THE CROOKED HEART OF THE CREDIT CRISIS (Columbia Journalism Review, September/October 2008, pp. 48-53)

The author, head of the business and finance desk at CJR, writes that while there have been many good articles about the subprime mortgage fiasco that has resulted in the widespread crisis in the credit markets, most have treated it as a "kind of natural disaster or nasty turn in the business cycle." There is acknowledgment that abusive practices did occur, but Starkman writes that

few have reported about how extensive they were. He says that the most comprehensive and insightful reporting on the system that produced the credit crisis was a story aired in May 2008 on (U.S.) National Public Radio, called "The Giant Pool of Money". This narrative describes the global pool of savings, which had doubled to USD 70 trillion, was searching for higher returns, and the U.S. financial system, from the investment banks at the top, down to the mortgage brokers and salesmen across the country, was under tremendous pressure to create financial "products" for this money to invest in.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

8. Campbell, Kurt; Steinberg, James **MANAGING FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES IN PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITIONS** (Washington Quarterly, vol. 31, no. 4, Autumn 2008, pp. 7-20)

The end of the Cold War has changed the nature of the challenges, but the two-and-a-half-month transition that will take place at the end of this year poses even greater challenges than in the past. Although each transition is unique, the next president and his team need to understand the lessons of the past if he is to take advantage of the great opportunities for new U.S. leadership and avoid the landmines that lie ahead. Grave national security challenges during times of presidential transition are hardly new; selecting key personnel is further complicated by the sheer number of appointments that must be

made as a result of the widening scope of national security issues. Although cabinet officials are almost always named and confirmed by the first day in office, cumbersome vetting procedures and congressional overload can cause second- and third-tier appointments to languish for months, producing systemic uncertainty and wedging open a dangerous window of vulnerability.

9. Kagan, Robert **THE SEPTEMBER 12 PARADIGM: AMERICA, THE WORLD, AND GEORGE W. BUSH** (Foreign Affairs, Vol. 87, No. 5, September/October 2008, pp. 25-39)

Future presidents should not shy away from using U.S. power to promote American values. September 11 changed a presidential administration once leery of "nation building," into an activist for democracy, achieving

minimal results while accelerating growing ambiguity from Europe. The United States and other democratic nations share a common aspiration for a liberal international order, argues the author, which is increasingly coming under pressure from both "great-power autocracies" and "radical Islamic terrorism." In the face of these challenges, "a return to realism" is as important as ever, and all sides must come together to offer both words and actions in democracy's defense.

10. Kohn, Richard **COMING SOON: A CRISIS IN CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS** (World Affairs, vol. 170, no. 3, Winter 2008, pp. 69-80)

Richard Kohn writes that the next president will face a fallout in relations between the armed forces and the civilian leadership almost as bad as the crisis

that nearly sank the Clinton administration in 1993. The military leadership has become deeply suspicious of the civilian political class, for many reasons, including the bungled Iraq occupation, dislike of former Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, an overstretched Army and Marine Corps, and the absence of offspring of the elites in military ranks. Unsustainable military budgets, the mismatch between current threats and a Cold-War-era military structure, and social issues, such as gays in the military and the spread of evangelical Christianity in the ranks will add to the tensions facing the next administration. The author urges the next President to appoint a Secretary of Defense who is knowledgeable and politically skilled, insulate the military from partisan politics and make frequent visits to military bases to help mend frayed relations.

U.S. SOCIETY & VALUES

11. Christian, Margena **BECOMING TYLER: BILL COLLECTOR TURNED BILLION-DOLLAR MEDIA MOGUL WAS MOLDED FROM PAIN, PROMISE AND PERSISTENCE** (Ebony, October 2008 Vol. 63, No. 12, pp. 72-84)

Tyler Perry is an accomplished African American director, screenwriter, playwright and actor. Yet just ten years ago he was struggling, recently homeless, hungry and having trouble paying the rent on his apartment, yet persevered believing in his talent and message. In 1998 he finally found success in the theater. In 2005 his **DIARY OF A MAD BLACK WOMAN** brought him success in film.

Perry has thrived in his movie career without the help of Hollywood; he owns 100 percent of his movies. He has also started added his name in front of his movies and plays: "I started to have them put my name on the marquee and on the ticket so that people would know this play is different from other shows. I was building a brand and it started to work. With film, I knew other movies would come along and try to duplicate what I was doing. That's why my name is front of my movies." From his Tyler Perry Studios in Atlanta he now manages a multimillion dollar enterprise. Having just turned 39, these achievements may be

12. Hvistendahl, Mara **CHINA MOVES UP TO FIFTH AS IMPORTER OF STUDENTS** (Chronicle of Higher Education, Vol. 54, No. 4, September 19, 2008, pp. A1, 21-A22)

After joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, China embarked on an ambitious plan to attract 120,000 international students by 2007 and went on to exceed its goal by 60 percent. While foreign students are a lucrative source of revenue for Chinese universities, China's bid for international students is driven by its diplomatic goal of developing soft power and cultivating a non-threatening image in the world, according to Hvi-

tendahl. As part of the same diplomatic drive, China has been opening Confucius Institutes around the world to form partnerships with foreign universities to promote Chinese language and culture. China also seeks to internationalize its universities and realizes it can't have world-class universities without large numbers of international students, says an expert on Chinese education Hvistendahl interviewed, Gerard Postiglione. Most of China's international students come from other parts of Asia, but the United States ranks third as a source, behind South Korea, the top source, and Japan.

U.S. Embassy Jakarta
Public Affairs Section
Jl. Medan Merdeka Selatan 4-5
Jakarta 10110

Phone: (021) 350-8467
Fax: (021) 350-8466
E-mail: ircjakarta@state.gov

Mail label here

ARTICLE ALERT REQUEST FORM

NO. 10, October 2008

Please write your complete name and address IN CAPITAL LETTERS, check (✓) the articles and send your request for October 2008 Article Alert items to the Information Resource Center, U.S. Embassy, before 30 December 2008 via fax (021) 350-8466 or email (IRCAalert@state.gov)

Name: _____ Position: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone/HP/Fax: _____ Email: _____

1. () THE 2008 ELECTION
2. () RETHINKING 2008
3. () HOW OBAMA WON THE NOMINATION
4. () THE NEXT PRESIDENT
5. () THE DEADLY WORLD OF FAKE DRUGS
6. () A MOUNTAIN, OVERLOOKED
7. () BOILER ROOM
8. () MANAGING FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL
SECURITY CHALLENGES IN PRESIDENTIAL
TRANSITIONS
9. () THE SEPTEMBER 12 PARADIGM
10. () COMING SOON: A CRISIS IN CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

11. () BECOMING TYLER
12. () CHINA MOVES UP TO FIFTH AS IMPORTER OF
STUDENTS

Special Offers:

- () New eJournal USA: Elections 2008: The Candidates
- () New eJournal USA: The Electoral College: 270 Voters
to Win
- () New eJournal USA: The Long Campaign:
U.S. Elections 2008